Wittnauer Precious Metals Guild
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THE MEDALLIC COLLECTOR'S NEWSLETTER

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U.S. Presidents Make Numismatic News

THE CONVERSATIONS of coin collectors this past month have been sprinkled with the names of four U.S. Presidents: Abraham Lincoln, Lyndon B. Johnson, Harry S. Truman and Richard M. Nixon. All four famous names have caused unusual excitement and speculation in the coin market.

Filtering into the mainstream currency now are the gleaming new 1973 Lincoln cents. Ordinarily, a re-issue causes little comment—it's simply the same old coin. But these pennies have so far revealed at least five changes from the ones issued since 1969. Even one tiny change would be enough to put coin collectors into a dither—but **five** make a real windfall!

The deaths of former Presidents Truman and Johnson have brought renewed focus on coins and medallions minted in their honor.

President Nixon's inauguration was the occasion for striking several new medals bearing his portrait. Indeed, the Wittnauer Precious Metals Guild created **two** such works—a medallion and an 8" sterling silver plate.

Coin collectors have been trying avidly to detect the changes on the new Lincoln cent. The following have been confirmed by Dr. Alan J. Goldman, Asst. Mint Director for Technology, Washington, D.C.:

(1) The numeral 3 is slightly different in style than it was on the 1963 cent.
(2) The initials of the engraver, Frank Gasparo, are larger.
(3) Because the motto, "In God We Trust," was getting too close to the border, it was moved back.
(4) The letter Y in LIBERTY is slightly thicker and more slanted.
(5) The figure 7 in 1973 is more pointed, more slanted, and is 1/10 millimeter taller than last year.

Collectors have noted that the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on the reverse seem to be more sharply defined, but Dr. Goldman did not confirm this detail. He did point out that in 1969 the master die for the Lincoln cent was redesigned. Among other changes, Lincoln got a new hair-do, with higher waves on top, and clipped evenly at the neckline. Since 1969 many details have blurred, so the starting point for the new 1973 coin was the 1969 die.

Next on the list of excitement-provokers are the presidential medals of Harry S. Truman, Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard M. Nixon. As Nathan N. Eglit, noted collector and author, has written: "Medals are facts that also add to the history of the man. They are portrayals of the man as seen through the eye of the artist. They furnish a means of identification with the man..."

Wittnauer Memorial Medal to Harry S. Truman, obverse.

Wittnauer Memorial Medal to Lyndon B. Johnson, obverse.

Truman had literally dozens of medallions struck in his honor. Pictured here is the Wittnauer medal created after the late President's death. (This medal and the Johnson medal are now available only to Wittnauer subscribers—see enclosed flyer for details.) Many other medals were created by foreign countries or private mints. Those interested in receiving a complete list should contact the Harry S. Truman Library in Independence, Missouri.

While President Johnson was in office, probably more dramatic occurrences took place in the numismatic world than during any other period in the 20th century. Silver was removed from the nation's coins; a new Mint was built in Philadelphia; the "gold cover" was removed from Federal Reserve Notes; the first Kennedy half-dollar was struck. In addition, Johnson signed a law allowing the Josiah K. Lilly estate a multi-million dollar tax write-off in exchange for the gift of 6,125 gold coins to the Smithsonian Institution. Many handsome inaugural medals for LBJ were struck in the U.S., in Canada, and Munich. A great deal of this activity came as a much-needed booster shot for coin hobbyists and dealers who had been resented and legislated against by previous administrations, because it was feared that they caused runs on certain coins, or hoarded them in order to create "false" markets. Johnson himself became extremely interested in numismatics, and in 1964 entertained a delegation of experts at a White House reception. The memorial medal struck in his honor by the Wittnauer Precious Metals Guild is shown here.

It is too early to predict the value or lasting interest of the new Nixon-Agnew Inauguration Medal, which was struck in both silver and bronze. Statistics are not yet available as to the number sold by the January 31st deadline. As in the case of other presidents, no doubt there will be more commemorative medallions honoring Nixon in years to come.

Coin Shows, Exhibits, Events

If you're a beginning collector, you may not be aware of all the activities in or near your community that pertain to your fascinating hobby. From time to time we hope to give you reviews of some of these events. For those lucky enough to have been in the California area in March, the big event this past spring was the National Exonumia Collectors Jamboree, March 16-18, at the Hyatt House in San Jose. "Exonumia" means collections of coins other than government-issue. Medallion collectors were especially intrigued by this large-scale show, which had the usual line-up of bourses, plus seminars, an auction, and a banquet.

Shown here are 2 masterpieces from the current exhibition at the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. These are a Naxian tetradrachma of 461 B.C., with the head of Dionysus by the Aitna Master (left); and a Syracuse tetradrachma of 475 B.C. with the head of Artemis - Arethusa surrounded by dolphins. The museum is open, free, 7 days a week.

Tourists and students in the Ozarks have the unique opportunity to view a display of 100,000 coins as well as paper money at the School of the Ozarks, Point Lookout, Missouri. Grounds of the school are situated in the scenic area just over the ridge from the Arkansas Ozarks, overlooking Lake Taneycomo. Tourists in the area should not miss

this unusual stop-over. The museum has an entire wall devoted to a Numismatic Hall of Fame for prominent citizens of surrounding states. The campus itself is of interest to sightseers.

The special coins bourse at the 29th annual National Antique show (New York's Madison Square Garden, Feb. 17-25), was a disappointment to this reviewer. Advance notices said there would be exhibits as well as a 30-dealer bourse, but there were less than 20 dealers, and none of the "big name" ones of the City. All were from Brooklyn, Staten Island, or small suburban towns in New Jersey. Their displays were simply dumped on tables in unimaginative heaps. No special exhibits were in evidence. To their credit, however, most of the dealers were courteous and quite eager to talk about coins—and showed remarkable patience with the small children who were pawing over the samples on display.

Visitors and residents in the New York City area should make a point of stopping by the Chase Manhattan Bank's Money Museum, on the Avenue of the Americas between 48th & 49th Sts., open free from 10 am to 5 pm, Tuesday to Saturday. The display—when this publication went to press—was all about pirates and their treasures. Windows showed a replica of a captain's cabin, and other exciting mock-ups of those glorious, swashbuckling days. Locked in display cases are many actual coins and relics of the period. The Money Museum show is changed every two or three months, so if readers miss this one, the next will prove equally intriguing. If you have children who are just beginning a coin collection, they'll be enthralled with this place!

Queen Elizabeth II Graces New Coins

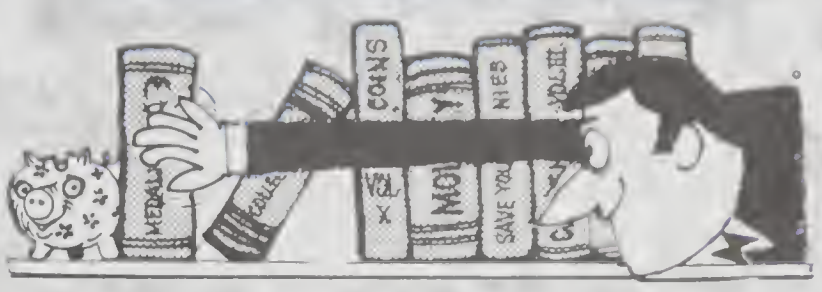
The end of 1972 was marked by the issuance in Britain of a commemorative coin for the 25th wedding anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip. Crown size, 38.6 millimeters, with reeded edge, the silver 25 New Pence coin shows a bust of the Queen on the obverse, facing right, with the legend "D.G. REG. F.D. ELIZABETH II" (By the grace of God, Queen, Defender of the Faith, Elizabeth II) around the border. The reverse shows flowering vines in the center, with the initials EP (Elizabeth and Philip) superimposed on the flowers,

Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip
1972 commemorative coin
for their 25th Wedding Anniversary

separated by a cupid with bow, and topped by a crown. The border legend reads, "ELIZABETH AND PHILIP 20 NOVEMBER 1947-1972." Although issued by the Royal Mint, London, it bears no mint mark.

Another coin with the Queen's profile, again facing right and bearing the same legend on the obverse as the anniversary coin, commemorates the accession of Britain to the European Community on January 1, 1973. The reverse bears the legend, "1973/50/PENCE" in the center in three lines, framed by a circle of nine intertwined hands. These represent the nine European Communities, bound together by trust, assistance and friendship.

The Medallic Collector's Book Shelf



Reviews of Current Books,
Lists of Reference Books

For the beginning collector we recommend "Basic Knowledge for the Coin Collector" by Ed Neuce ($1), Coin World, Box 150, Sydney, Ohio 45365; and "Introduction to Numismatics" ($1) from American Numismatics Assoc., Box 2366, Colorado Springs, Colo. 80901. Both contain many illustrations of mintmarks, coin types, and have ample information on the history of coins and how to collect for fun and profit.

Just off the press is the second edition of **Coins of the World 1750-1850,** by W.D. Craig. (Western Pub. Co., Racine, Wisconsin 53404. 448 pp., $10.) This is a handsomely bound and illustrated volume, a "collector's item" in itself. Lists coins chronologically by country, identifies by date, catalog number, denomination and metal. Shows current retail values. Scholarly -- but not too "highbrow" for the younger readers.

Coins and Currency of Panama, by Capt. Julius Grigore, Jr. (Krause Publications, Iola, Wisc. 54945. 202 pp., $6.50) covers more than numismatics of that small country. Contains colorful historical anecdotes from the days of pirate Sir Henry Morgan in 1671, to present coinage. Describes the natives, arrival of explorers, construction of the Canal and development of modern monetary system. Loaded with illustrations and the author's personal adventures. Fun reading, and a handy reference volume!

The 1973 Eighth edition of **Appraising and Selling Your Coins,** by Robt. & Jack Friedberg, has just been issued by the Coin and Currency Institute Inc., New York, N.Y. 10001. (174 pp., hard cover, $2.25.) Popularly known as "The Green Coin Book" because of its distinctive cover, the new edition continues in the tradition of former ones. Illustrates types of notes and coins, gives mintage for individual years, and values for U.S. coins, Colonial issues, Confederate issues, Canadian notes and coins. Has more than twenty pages describing how to sell coins, understanding the grades, mintmark and other details that make coins valuable.

1856 Kansas Territory $3.00 bill Courtesy-The Chase Manhattan Bank, N.A.

"small change" A Column of Little-known Coin Facts

- The ancient period of Chinese numismatics extends down to the beginning of the Han dynasty, about 200 B.C.
- In 1854, the Delaware City Bank of the old Kansas Territory featured a woman's picture on $1 bill.
- A $3 bill, featuring three cherubs, was issued by a Kansas bank in 1856.
- Because of a silver shortage, no silver pennies were struck during the reign of Edward III of England, from 1335 to 1344.
- The first Iceland coins were private issues distributed by grocers and bakers.
- Moroccan coins are dated according to the Mohammedan calendar.
- The Far East used bricks of tea as currency for many centuries.
- Jacob Perkins, 1766-1849, of Newburyport, Mass., invented the stereotype steel plate engraver for bank notes.

Do Take Some Wooden Nickels!

Formely used as tokens (like today's coupons), as advertising gimmicks (like today's campaign buttons), or as inexpensive commemorative "medals," wooden nickels are gaining in value as the nostalgia craze catches on. Shown here are several clever examples -- and even one for the late Harry Truman, who always loved a corny joke.

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